

IN THE CLAIMS

The status of each claim is listed below.

Claims 1–27 (Cancelled).

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): A method of increasing the drought resistance of plants, comprising

introducing a polynucleotide encoding a protein having raffinose synthase activity into plants and

growing plants under drought conditions to select ~~selecting~~ plants which have higher drought resistance compared to the plants prior to introducing the polynucleotide.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 28, wherein the plant is selected from the group consisting of *Arabidopsis*, *Glycine*, *Vicia*, rape-seed, *Helianthus*, *Gossypium*, sugar beet, *Oryza*, *Saccharum*, corn, and *Sorghum*.

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 28, wherein the polynucleotide is introduced into the plant on a vector.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 28, wherein the polynucleotide is introduced into a chromosome of the plant.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 28, wherein the protein comprises the amino acid sequence in SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claim 33 (Currently Amended): A method of increasing the drought resistance of plants, comprising:

introducing a polynucleotide encoding a protein having raffinose synthase activity into plants, wherein said polynucleotide comprises SEQ ID NO: 2 or a polynucleotide that hybridizes under stringent conditions to SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein the stringent conditions comprise washing at 60°C in 1 X SSC and 0.1% SDS, and

growing plants under drought conditions to select ~~selecting~~ plants which have higher drought resistance compared to the plants prior to introducing the polynucleotide.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 33, wherein the plant is selected from the group consisting of *Arabidopsis*, *Glycine*, *Vicia*, rape-seed, *Helianthus*, *Gossypium*, sugar beet, *Oryza*, *Saccharum*, corn, and *Sorghum*.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 33, wherein the polynucleotide is introduced into the plant on a vector.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 33, wherein the polynucleotide is introduced into a chromosome of the plant.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 33, wherein the polynucleotide comprises SEQ ID NO: 2.

Claim 38 (Currently Amended): A method of increasing resistance to high salt concentration in plants,
comprising introducing a polynucleotide encoding a protein having raffinose synthase activity into plants and
growing plants under high salt conditions to select ~~selecting~~ plants which have higher resistance to high salt concentration compared to the plants prior to introducing the polynucleotide.

Claim 39 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 38, wherein the plant is selected from the group consisting of *Arabidopsis*, *Glycine*, *Vicia*, rape-seed, *Helianthus*, *Gossypium*, sugar beet, *Oryza*, *Saccharum*, corn, and *Sorghum*.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 38, wherein the polynucleotide is introduced into the plant on a vector.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 38, wherein the polynucleotide is introduced into a chromosome of the plant.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 38, wherein the protein comprises the amino acid sequence in SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claim 43 (Currently Amended): A method of increasing resistance to high salt concentration in plants, comprising:

introducing a polynucleotide encoding a protein having raffinose synthase activity into the plant, wherein said polynucleotide comprises SEQ ID NO:2 or a polynucleotide that hybridizes under stringent conditions to SEQ ID NO:2, wherein the stringent conditions comprise washing at 60°C in 1 X SSC and 0.1% SDS, and

growing plants under drought conditions to select ~~selecting~~ plants which have higher resistance to high salt concentration compared to the plants prior to introducing the polynucleotide.

Claim 44 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 43, wherein the plant is selected from the group consisting of *Arabidopsis*, *Glycine*, *Vicia*, rape-seed, *Helianthus*, *Gossypium*, sugar beet, *Oryza*, *Saccharum*, corn, and *Sorghum*.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 43, wherein the polynucleotide is introduced into the plant on a vector.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 43, wherein the polynucleotide is introduced into a chromosome of the plant.

Claim 47 (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 43, wherein the polynucleotide comprises SEQ ID NO: 2.